



# Off-speed in Off-season for Tuivailala

by Brian Stull

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With his 99mph fastball and rise from Palm Beach to eventually being a September call-up for the St. Louis Cardinals, Sam Tuivailala made a big enough impression last season that most of Cardinals Nation learned how to [correctly say his last name](#). This year, he looks to build upon that experience.

“Getting a taste of it was really useful,” described the 22-year old right-hander. “To kind of see how everyone goes about their way everyday. Seeing what it’s like to actually play in the Bigs—it was really useful for me. I took everything that I learned from there and kind of transferred it to the Fall League. That made me relax, as you say, a little bit better too. Going into this season, I feel more comfortable.”

Tuivailala appeared in 12 games for the Peoria Javelinas in the Arizona Fall League and recorded five saves. He allowed two earned runs on 10 hits in 14 innings with 13 strikeouts and eight walks.

“I really worked on my curveball and changeup,” shared Sam. “I threw it there more than I did in the past probably two seasons. In order for it to work, you have to keep throwing it.”

And he did—even with initially not the results he was hoping for.

“It’s all part of the process,” explained Tuivailala, who credited pitching coach Jason Simontacchi with helping him on the off-speed pitches. “I was with him in Peoria (A), so he kind of knew how my pitching was. We went over video a lot, almost every day.”

“I think it was the Championship Game, that’s where I ended pretty good with my curveball and everything. Leaving the Fall League, I definitely feel confident with all three pitches.”

Where those three pitches will be utilized has not yet been determined.

“I’m going to play whatever they want me to do,” stated Tuivailala. “I’ll do whatever it takes to make the team, but going into Spring Training I’m just going to take it as another day for me. I’m obviously going to compete at my highest level. The focus is going to be through the roof as well. I’m just looking forward to it.”

For everyone wondering how to say my last name its "2-E-Vai-lala"  
[#PracticeMakesPerfect](#)

— Sam Tuivailala (@Stuivailala) [January 27, 2015](#)